

Tears and Tangles by TeenCaterpillar

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Summary:

“You remember that queer bed and breakfast we had looked at?” Steve said, barely able to contain the excitement in his voice. Both of Billy’s eyebrows were up to his hairline, mouth open in a small ‘o’.

“You-- That’s too fancy--” Billy began, his words warring with the excitement in his body and face.

“I know it’s a lot for our, like, first kinda birthday thing maybe but--” Steve took a breath, letting the words work themselves out before trying to speak. “We missed a lot of time,” he said softly. Billy’s face changed minutely and he stepped forward, hand resting on Steve’s hip. “I just wanted to make up for it, I guess.” Billy smiled, his other hand cupping Steve’s cheek.

Tears and Tangles

Author's Note:

So there's that post about someone bathing and washing their boyfriend's hair and he gets overwhelmed because no one had ever done something so sweet and intimate without expecting something more. And I just. The person said "my boyfriend is not a young man," so obviously I went *Middle Aged Harringrove*.

I just needed some fluff and sweet guys who found love later than they may have wanted, but that finding it at all was fulfilling and beautiful and *I just love love okay*

Unebata'd

Steve was so fucking *excited*. He'd been planning this for a month. A bed and breakfast, a romantic evening together, and hopefully, one of the best birthdays Billy'd ever had. He bit his lip, foot tapping nervously as he waited for Billy to get home from his short shift. Everything was packed, Steve had even made a mix CD, and he checked the clock again, hoping more than a minute had gone by. He swore he saw the second hand go back one before going forward, teasing him.

So maybe Steve had gone a little overboard. Maybe he had put too much effort into Billy's birthday. But he couldn't *help it*. He and Billy had only reunited 8 months and 3 days ago (not that he was counting), and Steve was maybe kind of excited about the idea of getting to spoil Billy. Of getting that romantic weekend away he'd always wanted himself. His ex wives had never been truly interested in him, or get away weekends, so Steve craved it. He was 47 for fuck's sake, he deserved one. And so did *Billy*. Gorgeous, just as handsome as ever Billy, with hands rough from work and eyes crinkled in the corners. Steve sighed a little at the thought, fiddling with the clasp of his watch.

The funny thing was, Steve hadn't even planned on going to that particular auto shop. He'd been planning on holding out and going to his usual guy once he'd gotten back to Hawkins, but his car had had other plans, breaking down basically outside the shop Billy had been working at. Steve almost hadn't believed it when he rang the bell and Billy came out from the door to the workshop, both of them stopping in shock, taking the other in.

Steve was brought out of his thoughts by the front door clicking shut. Steve got up quickly, his knees clicking in protest, but he ignored them because his *boyfriend* was home and he was *excited*.

Billy sat on the bench by the door, oil stained and calloused hands making quick work of his boots. Steve paused in the kitchen doorway, watching Billy. His heart pounded a little, like when he'd been a teen and sneaking looks at Billy in the locker room. Then, Billy had been thick and muscled, abs defined and glistening in the shower. Billy was still muscled, but he'd grown a bit of a gut. Along with that, there was some added weight to his tanned face, but Steve thought it made him look softer. Made him cuter. The short beard didn't hurt either. His hair was still long and golden, barely any greys (unlike Steve), and pulled up into a high bun. He groaned as he sat up, cracking his neck. As blue eyes opened and a smile spread on Billy's face, Steve made his way over.

"Hey there, birthday boy," Steve teased, leaning down to place a chaste kiss to Billy's lips. Billy let out a small hum, rolling his eyes just a bit.

"Birthday *man*, thank you," he replied. He stood up, cracking his back this time, and Steve probably should have stepped back, but he wanted to stay pressed into Billy's space. So he wrapped an arm around his waist and tugged Billy even closer. "You already planning on giving me a gift?" Billy's mouth twitched in a smirk and Steve had to kiss him again.

"Mmm, as nice as that sounds, we actually should head out." Billy raised a brow as Steve pulled away.

"And where are we going?" Billy asked, following Steve as he made his way to the bedroom. He didn't say anything when he saw the two

packed suitcases, but Steve could feel his curiosity like something palpable. Steve picked them up, turning to Billy with a smile.

“You remember that queer bed and breakfast we had looked at?” Steve said, barely able to contain the excitement in his voice. Both of Billy’s eyebrows were up to his hairline, mouth open in a small ‘o’.

“You-- That’s too fancy--” Billy began, his words warring with the excitement in his body and face.

“I know it’s a lot for our, like, first kinda birthday thing maybe but--” Steve took a breath, letting the words work themselves out before trying to speak. “We missed a lot of time,” he said softly. Billy’s face changed minutely and he stepped forward, hand resting on Steve’s hip. “I just wanted to make up for it, I guess.” Billy smiled, his other hand cupping Steve’s cheek.

“I can’t say it’s what I was imagining, but any time with you is gonna be good, pretty boy.” Billy knew that the old nickname still made Steve blush, and this time was no different. “Guess we should head out then, huh? I can see you’re a little excited,” he teased, tongue poking out between his teeth playfully. Steve rolled his eyes, but his grin was wide and made his cheeks hurt.

“Get in the car, Blue,” Steve said, holding the suitcases out.

The drive was scenic, beautiful forest surrounding them. Steve had the window rolled down as Billy drove, silver rings glinting in the evening sun, and he took deep breaths of the fresh air. Indianapolis was nice, but Steve still missed the feeling of living closer to the woods. Sure, there had been *monsters*, but at least he could take a full breath of air without his lungs protesting at the smog. The mix CD he’d made played loudly through the speakers, making Steve smile wide. He felt something brush his hand where it rested by his side and looked down. Billy’s fingers gently wrapped around his and Steve felt his heart skip a beat. He looked up and Billy was still looking out the windshield, but there was a small smile on his face.

The past 8 months had been like a dream, really. It hadn’t taken very long for Steve and Billy to admit their feelings this time around, thank fuck, but still, Steve couldn’t *believe* it. Couldn’t believe he’d

run into Billy in an auto shop in Indianapolis, couldn't believe he'd agreed to coffee, and couldn't believe that he had felt the same. All these years later, and he *still* held a candle for Steve, the way Steve did for him in turn.

Steve's fingers tightened around Billy's and they sped down the road, hearts light and full.

When they arrived at the bed and breakfast, the couple running the place warmly welcomed them before leading them to their room. Steve had requested their nicest suite with the biggest tub. He had *plans* after all. The room itself was nice. Classy and comfortable, with some rainbow accents, just in case the giant sign reading HERE AND QUEER on the front lawn hadn't been enough of a clue. It might have been a smidge cheesy, but Steve hadn't really ever had *pride*. And if the small fond smile on Billy's face as he picked up the rainbow mug on the mantle, he probably hadn't either.

"Like it?" Steve asked, coming up behind Billy and wrapping his arms around his waist. Billy leaned back, heading turning slightly so he could speak into Steve's ear while he rested his chin on Billy's shoulder.

"Love it," he replied gently. "It's... I never really imagined myself at a place like this but it's really nice. Makes me feel like a fucking grandpa--"

"That's 'cause of all the quilts--"

"--*but*, I really appreciate you doing this. For me." Billy put the mug back, turning his face away from Steve. Still, he didn't miss the red that had blossomed over Billy's cheeks. Steve hid his small smile in Billy's neck, giving him a gentle kiss on his pulse. Billy tilted his head to the side with a small hum, hands covering Steve's where they wrapped around him. "So, you got *another* gift for me?" Steve could *hear* Billy's smirk.

"Mhmm," Steve hummed, pulling away. "But that's later. First, dinner." Billy huffed and turned to Steve, hand catching his.

"I suppose we'll need the energy," he replied dramatically. Steve

snorted and tugged Billy in for another kiss. He really couldn't get enough.

All through dinner, Steve was practically shaking in excitement. The food was delicious, all homemade, and Billy had been excited when they brought out Lemon Meringue pie for dessert. Steve had asked specifically for Billy's favorite and the smile on his face was well worth every penny of the visit. But Steve *still* had one last final plan that he'd been the most nervous about. He wasn't sure if Billy would be into it or not, but he was pretty sure Billy would enjoy it.

Billy released his belt as they walked into the room with a sigh of relief, scratching his belly lightly.

"That was fucking *good*," he groaned, sitting on the bed. Steve kissed his cheek with a grin. He felt like he'd been smiling all day, and he probably had been. It was thrilling, living his life so honestly. Spending time with Billy and loving him so fully and openly in a way he'd never been able to. Had never let himself. Billy looked up at him, grateful and warm as he reached up and turned Steve's face so he could kiss his lips. It was gentle and sweet, but the heat grew as Billy's tongue ran along the seam of Steve's lips.

"Mmm, babe," Steve said, lips still pressed against Billy's as he tried to pull Steve onto the bed with him. "Billy, Billy," Steve said through a giggle, pulling back even as Billy pouted up at him.

"What now?" He whined, flopping back onto the bed. "You're killing me here, Harrington." Steve scoffed and kicked at Billy's foot.

"I have *plans*, Hargrove. Now hush and get undressed while I set up the tub." Billy propped himself up on his elbows with a wry grin.

"Oh, tub sex?"

"Something like that," Steve said with a wink. Nothing like that actually, but he wanted to surprise Billy. Wanted him to walk in to the whole set up and get a pleasant surprise. Steve started running the water, tossing in a small amount of bubble bath. Just enough to give the water a nice scent. Then he set out the nice shampoo and conditioner he'd gotten for Billy's curls, making sure they were

within reach of the tub. Finally, as the tub finished filling up, he tossed in some rose petals and filled up two glasses with champagne. Steve stripped quickly before tossing on a robe and popping his head back out of the bathroom. Billy sat on the bed in his own robe, glasses on as he read one of the books that had been displayed on the bedside table. He looked up and smiled softly when Steve whistled.

“Finally *ready*?” He asked, shutting the book and slowly getting out of the bed.

“It’s worth the wait, Blue. I promise.” Billy chuckled as he came in, eyes widening just a bit.

“Whoa, you really went all out for tub sex.” Steve came up behind Billy, rubbing his shoulders.

“As nice as that sounds, I was actually uh, thinking we could just bathe together. And I could wash your hair.” Steve’s stomach dropped when he felt Billy’s shoulders tense under his hands.

“What?” He asked, something weird Steve couldn’t place in his voice.

“I got some nice shampoo and soaps,” Steve continued, pushing forward. He wanted Billy to relax. Wanted him to feel pampered and loved and by god, Billy was *going to feel loved*. “Wanted to soap you up and scrub you down.”

“This how you get all the girls into bed?” Billy asked, aiming for teasing but it didn’t land right. Steve sighed a little, unswayed.

“No, and I don’t think you’re a girl, Billy, so don’t try that shit.” Steve gently tugged Billy’s robe open, letting his hands linger as he pushed it off his shoulders and to the floor. “Just get in, okay? Trust me?” Billy’s eyes were sharp and guarded, making Steve’s stomach clench some more, but he nodded minutely before climbing in. Steve followed suit and got behind Billy, who looked out of his depth in the warm, rose petal filled water. “C’mere,” Steve murmured, getting Billy to shift back just a bit. The mood was precarious, and Steve wasn’t sure talking would actually help, so instead he got to work. He grabbed the loofa, drizzling it with the eucalyptus and mint wash, before gently starting to scrub Billy’s shoulders. He worked slowly,

taking his time as he washed Billy from shoulder to foot. Billy's skin was warm, the muscles tense underneath, so Steve would pause and massage them, slowly getting Billy to relax.

The dim lights added to the atmosphere, and soon Steve got into a rhythm of scrubbing and massaging. He had snuck some looks at Billy's face, but he could never see much beyond Billy's eyes being closed. As Steve washed him, his heart sank more and more as each minute passed in silence. But he was determined. He was going to pamper Billy and he was going to *like it*. Steve set the loofa to the side, squirting some shampoo into his hand to lather up. He gently massaged Billy's scalp, fingers scraping over the skin softly. Billy's head tilted back as he leaned into the touch, and for a moment Steve's heart lightened. But when Billy fully leaned back into his lap, Steve noticed the tears. Billy's eyes were still closed, his face stoic, but tears streamed down his face. He was *weeping*. Steve considered stopping, but Billy leaned into the touch when he paused, a small, shuddery sigh escaping his lips. So Steve pressed on.

Steve shampooed Billy's hair before scooping water and delicately washing it out. He used the same process to condition Billy's hair, using his fingers to gently comb out any tangles as he went. Billy's eyes remained closed and his cheeks remained wet, even as the tears slowly began to stop.

"Done," Steve said quietly, his voice stark and loud as it cut through the silence. He kissed Billy's forehead, helping him sit up as Billy let out a shaky breath. Steve got out of the tub, drying himself off quickly before turning to Billy, who had gotten out himself. He dried Billy off, unable to look up at him. Had he fucked up? Had he really, *really* fucked up? He thought Billy would enjoy the pampered treatment. Thought he would like the intimacy of a bath, just the two of them enjoying each other's company. But, apparently, he had been wrong.

The air between them was tense, so Steve wasn't sure what would happen if he *did* try to make a move now, so he didn't. Just followed Billy to the bed and hovered as Billy sat down, hands holding his robe tight around him, even though it was knotted shut. It was only a moment before Billy spoke.

"I--" He paused, swallowing thickly. Steve waited, unsure of if he should get closer or not. Billy took a deep breath, closing his eyes before opening them again. "I don't want you to-- to think I hated that," Billy said, voice thick with emotion. "I didn't. I..." Steve sat next to Billy, the tight knot in his chest starting to loosen. He wrapped an arm around Billy's shoulders and pulled him close. Billy responded by burying his face in Steve's shoulder. "I'm sorry. I'm sorry I'm not good with words."

"Take your time, Blue," Steve replied gently. He gently scratched the base of Billy's skull and he felt Billy shake slightly. Steve was confused, but this was obviously something important that Billy wanted to say, so he waited, even if his nerves were ramped up over 100.

"No one has ever done that for me," Billy finally said. Steve took a sharp inhale. "Not without it ramping up to sex. It's never-- No one has ever just *taken care* of me. You--" Billy let out a muffled sound into Steve's shoulder. And Steve... Steve was taken aback.

"Really?" Billy was only a year younger than he was. And they'd lived long fucking lives before finding each other again. It made Steve's heart *ache*.

"Sometimes," Billy said with a thick swallow. "Sometimes I forget just how *good* you are. How much you've shown me about myself and love in general. And it just got a little overwhelming tonight."

"Oh, Billy, I woulda stopped--" Steve began, guilt starting to gnaw at his insides.

"I didn't want you to," Billy said, cutting him off. He finally sat up, looking Steve in the eyes. He was crying again, eyes shining as he gripped the lapel of Steve's robe. "It wasn't a bad overwhelming. I just... I'm still not used to being loved like this." Steve leaned in, kissing Billy. It was intense, even without lustful heat behind it. It was Steve pouring everything into it, Billy doing the same. It was both of them, trying to speak without words. Trying to explain what their hearts felt, even though they couldn't always find the right words. "Fuck, Stevie--" Billy croaked, lips only free for a moment before Steve was back into his space. He turned, gently coaxing Billy

to lay back on the bed as Steve crawled on top of him. He cupped Billy's cheeks in his hands and kissed him. Kissed him and kissed him and kissed him until their lips were puffy and red. Until they were breathing harshly and their robes were tented. Until Steve could feel the beard burn on his face. Steve kissed Billy with everything he had, tongue rolling in his mouth as he gently ran his hands down Billy's torso. He tugged at the knot in Billy's robe, huffing slightly when it didn't fall open immediately.

"God damn it," Steve grumbled under his breath, pulling back to untie the knot at Billy's waist. Billy laughed, reaching to help Steve.

"Funny, you're usually so much better at using your fingers," Billy teased. Steve gave him a nasty look, but Billy just pulled him down by his lapel and kissed him. Steve let himself get lost in the kiss again, untying his own robe with much more ease.

"I'll show you good with fingers," Steve mumbled against Billy's lips. He reached down, grabbing Billy's penis and giving a slow pull. Billy grunted, cock slowly filling out. They weren't kids anymore, and while Steve did mourn for the time they lost, the sex they could have been having, they still had fun with what they had energy to do. "Fuck, I forgot the damn lube, shit, one second," Steve rambled as he got off of Billy. Billy chuckled again, shrugging his robe all the way off and pushing it off the bed to fall on the floor. Steve tossed his robe onto the chair by the desk in the room, squatting to rummage through the suitcase for the bottle of lube. Once he had it, he made his way back over to Billy, who was now lounging on the bed with a grin, hand slowly dragging his foreskin up and down, just teasing himself. Steve had to stop a moment, all the blood in his head rushing south. Truly, Billy was a sight to behold. He'd gotten more tattoos, his arms nearly covered, as well as his back. He had a chest piece too, beautifully running along his collarbone and above his pecs. Steve stared, just taking Billy in.

"What, like what you see, Sugar Lips?" Billy said, biting his bottom lip.

"Love it," Steve replied breathily, the ridiculous nickname Billy had given him just making him feel hotter. Billy blushed, expecting teasing, and Steve came back over, settling himself between Billy's

legs. As Billy let go of his cock, Steve took it in his hand, immediately sucking the tip into his mouth.

“Fuck!” Billy exclaimed, hands spasming before one fisted in the sheets and the other tangled itself in Steve’s hair. Steve smirked around the dick in his mouth, looking up at Billy smugly. Billy just rolled his eyes, letting out a low groan as Steve gently nipped at his foreskin. He tugged it down, swirling his tongue around the head, revelling the velvety feel of Billy’s cock in his mouth. He loved giving Billy head, and could probably do it all day if his jaw didn’t get sore as easily as it did now. With a small hum, one that made Billy shiver with pleasure, Steve began to slowly bob his head. Steve loved to play with Billy’s foreskin, biting it and licking under it. He swirled his tongue around under the skin, almost mindlessly. “S-Shit--” Billy gasped, hand tugging on Steve’s hair. Steve bobbed again, sucking as he pulled back and dragging his tongue along the vein in Billy’s cock as he went down. “Thought-- Thought you were gonn-gonna show me how *good* those f-fin-fuck-fingers were,” Billy choked out. Steve pulled off his dick with a pop, leaving the head red, angry, and glistening with spit.

“As you wish,” Steve replied, kissing the junction of Billy’s thigh and groin. “On your side, baby.” Billy turned on his side, dick bobbing with the movement, and it was almost painful for Steve to pull his eyes away. Steve settled himself behind Billy as he grabbed the lube and squirted a liberal amount into his hand. He gripped himself with a low moan, stroking himself to full hardness easily. He kissed Billy’s shoulders, smiling against his still lightly damp skin. “Gonna jerk you off nice and slow while I fuck your thighs,” Steve whispered against Billy’s skin. Billy gave a full body shudder, moaning softly. “You like that, huh, Blue?”

“Yeah,” Billy breathed out, pushing his ass back against Steve’s crotch, making Steve let out a small hiss. He slipped his penis between Billy’s thighs, moaning as he did. The soft skin paired with the light dusting of hair felt so *good* and Steve licked his lips. He slowly pumped his hips, finding his rhythm, before reaching around and starting to jerk Billy in time with his thrusts. Billy’s hips jerked into his hand as he gripped him, hand twisting a little over the head, just the way Billy liked. For a few minutes, the only sounds were the

squelch of the lube, both of their heavy breathing, and quiet curses as Steve stroked Billy, teasing him with his long fingers. "Fuck, *Steve*," Billy moaned, body shuddering as his breaths came in more shallow. Steve sped his hand up, smiling against Billy's skin as he came, jizz shooting out from his cock, the rest dribbling down Steve's hand. As Billy panted, body limp, Steve grabbed his hips and picked up his thrusts.

"Shit, Billy--! I love you, I love you, I love you...." Steve chanted the words against Billy's shoulder, pulling back as he came. He painted the back of Billy's thighs with his cum before going lax himself. Steve used his last bit of energy to flop onto his side, while Billy turned to face him. Steve turned his head, smiling at Billy, who was looking at Steve in such a loving way that he felt like a teenager again. "What?"

"I love you too," Billy replied, smile soft and sweet. Steve smiled back, rolling back over to wrap his arm around Billy and pull him close to his chest.

"Happy Birthday, Blue."